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INTELLIGENCE NOTE

BUREAU OF INTELLIGENCE AND RESEARCH

August 4, 1970

UN: PROBLEM OF DRUG ABUSE TO BE CONSIDERED AT SPECIAL MEETING IN GENEVA

Due largely to US initiative, a special session of the UN's Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) will begin in Geneva on September 28, 1970.

This session, which was unanimously approved by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) on July 24, is to consider short-and long-term policy recommendations for international action against drug abuse and to prepare a report to the 25th General Assembly, which meets this fall. In addition to focusing international attention on the drug problem, now reaching epidemic proportions, the CND meeting may also take some of the heat out of US discussions with Turkey over opium production in that country. The Turkish Government has recently been accused by its domestic critics of "selling-out" to US "pressure."*

US Takes Initiative. Feeling that the alarming increase in drug abuse is becoming a danger to all nations, the US took the initiative in the current ECOSOC session to assure that the problem would be discussed

*See RNAN-21 "Turkey: Opium Poppies--Reaping and Weeping Ahead", July 17, 1970 (CONFIDENTIAL)

SOC 11-5 Sur
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DECLASSIFIED
PA/HO, Department of State
E.O. 12958, as amended
June 22, 2004

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SOC 11-5 ECOSOC

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at the 25th General Assembly. A US resolution approved in ECOSOC calls for international action in three principal areas: (a) illicit traffic (establishing effective national and international enforcement machinery); (b) illegal production (stopping narcotic raw materials by all means); and (c) demand (reducing the illicit demand for drugs by means of treatment, rehabilitation, and education programs). Both the Turks and the Indians at first opposed the US proposal.

Indian Objections Pro-forma. India, which is the largest opium-producing country but also has the most stringent controls over illegal channels, appeared to be concerned that the CND meeting would be used as a forum to advocate the complete elimination of opium production. Actually, however, Indian reservations were based on India's opinion that the industrialized countries have managed to impose strict controls in the poppy-producing countries while refusing to accept equally strong controls on synthetic substances, which could be an even greater menace to the developing world. India agreed to go along after minor changes in the US draft.

Turks are Sensitive. The Turkish observer suggested amendments reflecting the Turkish Government's concern that the CND would focus on illicit opium production in Turkey. The Turks were assured that the term "drug abuse" was not restricted to narcotic drugs, and Turkish objections were satisfied by additions to the resolution's preamble.

During the discussions, however, the Turkish observer made quite clear to US officials his government's "serious concern" over the manner

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in which the US Government was handling the opium-production problem in Turkey, stating that US was treating the Turkish Government "like a small African country". Ankara's sensitivity to US "pressure" stems from Turkish domestic criticism on the opium issue, which followed Prime Minister Demirel's decree of June 30 announcing that areas in which poppies may legally be cultivated will be reduced from nine to seven provinces in 1971 and to four provinces by the 1972 spring harvest. The decree is a set-back to US efforts, which were aiming for a complete ban on opium cultivation by 1971. The subsequent reporting in the Turkish press of speeches and alleged comments by US officials critical of Turkey's handling of the opium issue has had an adverse impact upon Ankara's dealing with Washington.

Prospects. The CND discussions may serve to help Turkish Prime Minister Demirel domestically by demonstrating to his critics that illicit opium-production is of serious concern not only to the US but to the world. International consideration of the problem may have some effect also in conveying to many Turks that their country's role in world affairs will be measured in part by the cooperation Turkey gives to international efforts to curb the opium traffic.

While it is doubtful that the special meeting will produce any dramatic results, it will serve to focus world attention on the seriousness of the problem. For the US the meeting represents a welcome alternative

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means of action because of the disappointing results of the bilateral discussions with Turkey, which is the source of an estimated 80 per cent of the heroin entering the US annually (Mexico accounts for 15 per cent). The meeting may also give the US an opportunity to announce its proposal that the UN undertake pilot project on narcotics control, for which the US would make a special financial contribution.

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